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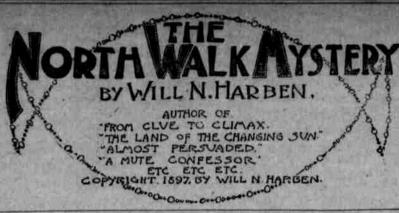
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AGENCY:

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on, I'm going: exciaimed Kalph, a smile and a sneer blending on his handsome face. "I am really sorry if I have intruded on you." Hendricks seemed to enjoy the situa-

"Call again, Mr. Benton," he laughed. "Sorry we are busy today." "I like your cheek," remarked Dr.

Lampkin when the young man had left "Sh!" The smile had left Hendricks' face. It was tense and serious. He rose

softly, tiptoed to the door, opened it slightly and looked out. "Can't be too cautious," he remarked as he leaned a chair against the door to keep it closed. "Yes, I admire my cheek," he went on as he came back to the doctor, "but I like his more. I tell you he's a corker."

"I dropped on to your ruse to get him out of the room," said Lampkin. "I knew of no Thompson or any corner

"Better to do it decently," returned the detective. "Nevergive 'em a chance to be defiant and tell you to mind your own business. My idea is to keep on friendly terms with the whole lot. It was that fragment I was after." Hendricks pointed to the charred remains of the envelope. "He was burning it as we came up stairs. I could smell it through the crack of the door. That's why I broke in so suddenly." Hendricks took a sheet of writing paper from the desk and slid it careful-

ly under the frail, crisp fragment.
"Bon't dare to breathe on it," he

cautioned as he carried it toward a window. ''It will go to pieces like a soap bubble. I was awfully afraid he'd get his foot on it and grind it into atoms.' The detective raised the sheet of paper to his eyes and examined the burned envelope carefully. Lampkin heard him ejaculate something in a tone of disappointment.

"Empty and blank at that!" he muttered. "What could the fellow mean by de

stroying it?" asked Dr. Lampkin. The brows of the detective met. He looked about the room, sniffed the air and pointed to a stream of smoke issuing from the room through a crack be-

neath a window sash. "He has burned more paper than that," he remarked. "He was all fired quick about it. We did not burst in on him soon enough."

As Hendricks spoke he began to thor-

oughly search the room. "Ah, running water!" he exclaimed, going to the hot and cold water basin in a little alcove adjoining the room and looking into it. "Got a match, doc-tor? It's dark here."

Lampkin struck one and gave it to him. Hendricks held it in the basin and carefully examined the porcelain surface. Suddenly he raised himself.

"Never saw his beat," he said. "The young rascal has absolutely washed the remains of a burned paper into the city sewer. He is now laughing in his sleeve at my maneuvering to get possession of that blank envelope. That's the second time he has done me. I'll keep the

"I don't quite like his looks," remarked the doctor. "It seems to me he is trying to cover up something."

Hendricks said nothing, but taking the charred envelope from the desk he laid it exactly on the spot where it had blown from Ralph's hand.
"What's that for?" asked Lampkin.

"It can't aid me to keep it, and when he comes back here and finds it still there he will be thrown off the track. Now we must take a peep at the young fellow's belongings. I don't think he was undressed last night that is, I am pretty sure he did not take off his shirt and necktie." "Wby?"

"Because a young man of his taste would never wear a black dress bow, such as he has on now, with a business suit of clothes."

"You think, then, that he was in evening dress last night?" asked Dr.

Hendricks opened a closet. "See all those coats neatly hung on coat stretchers back there?" he asked.

Lampkin nodded. "That shows the young man is order-ly by habit," went on the detective. "Well, here hangs his evening suit. It has simply been jerked on to the hook. You know a man is more particular about his evening suit than any other. There is little doubt that Ralph Benton took off these garments in a rush last night." Hendricks carried the coat, vest and trousers to one of the windows and examined them closely in the light. Lampkin saw him holding up first one article and then another, with a per-

plexed look on his face." "What's up?" asked the doctor, ap-

proaching him. "I can't account for the presence of these fragments of tow," answered Hendricks. "I find them on the lapels of the coat, on the front part of the vest and absolutely rubbed into the cloth on the inside of the tronsers legs. See!" he exclaimed. "The silk-has been worn off one of the vest buttons.

"That's strange," said Lampkin,
"I should think so," answered Hendricks. "How in thunder could a man get a suit of clothes in exactly that

"Might have been drunk," suggested

"That would not account for a direct

line of tow fragments from his ankles to his neck," said Hendricks. "If it were covered all over, it would be dif-

ferent, but" -- Hendricks turned and tung up the garments as he had found them. "It's chaos, my friend," he said. "Never was a matter in a more nebulous condition. First it's Miss Benton, then Montcastle, then Ralph,

"Me?" jested Lampkin, seeing that Hendricks had stopped for lack of

"Yes, you, blast your ugly picture!" retorted the detective, with a merry laugh. "You did it in your sleep after swimming the river in your nightshirt, holding your revolver over your head to keep it dry. Then you swam back, got into bed, and I waked you."

"You never play the clown except 'Who is your physician?" when you are thwarted and you rarely



He examined the burned envelope care

play the clown," said Lampkin. "Implied compliment-see?"

"Epigram. You shall write them for my play," said Hendricks, "You have forgotten more bright

things than I know," said Lampkin. "You'd know more if you'd forgotten fewer of your witticisms. How's that

for a roundabout compliment? I believe I shall write my epigrams myself." Some one rapped on the door. Hen-dricks opened it. It was Jane, the house-

"A man with a dog is down stairs, sir, to see you," she informed Hen-

"All right. Tell him I'll be down at once," said the detective. "He got here quick enough," remarked Hendricks to the doctor as they started down the

CHAPTER IX.

As they descended the last flight they saw Johnson in the front yard, holding Nebo by a chain. Instead of going directly out to him the detective turned into the library, where they found Miss Hastings and Miss Benton in conversation with a heavy set, gray baired man

about 60 years of age.
"Mr. Allen, Mr. Hendricks," said
Miss Benton. "I don't believe you have met.

Hendricks gave his hand to Mr. "You live in the house, I believe,

Mr. Allen," he remarked. "Yes," said Mr. Allen-"that is, I was living here till quite recently."

"I didn't see you at the inquest, l "No," stammered Allen. "I-I have

just learned of the murder through a morning extra. It is a horrible affair." "I presume you were surprised to hear of such a thing happening to your partner," remarked Hendricks tenta-

The spot where Allen stood was rather dark owing to the window curtains being drawn, and Lampkin could not see the old man's features clearly, but he faucied that his voice betrayed

decided nervousness. "I was, of course. It-it was all like a—a blow, don't you know," said Mr. Allen. "He was the last man"—

There was a loud barking of a dog outside. Hendricks stepped quickly to a window and parted the curtains.

"It's my bloodbound." he remarked, his gaze bent on Allen's face, which was now exposed to the full light from the outside. "I sent to New York for him. He is a fine English dog and can scent down the murderer if he is anywhere near here." Allen turned his face from the light.

Lampkin thought he looked ill. "What are you going to do with him?" asked Miss Benton.

"We will all go out to the north walk if you don't object," returned the detective, "and then I'll show you how

keen his scent is." "Oh, I don't want to see it!" cried the young lady. "The idea is horrible. You gentlemen may go, but Julia and I will stay here."

Allen said nothing, but Lampkin no-ticed that he put his hand on the edge of a table and leaved on it, quivering

"All right, then," said Hendricks,

'Come on, gentlemen."

Again the barking of the dog was

Again the barking of the dog was heard. This time it was nearer.

"Ah, there he is!" went on the detective enthusiastically. He threw up the window sash and called, "Here, Nebo, here!" Miss Hastings and Miss Benton drew near to Hendricks and looked out. A man was holding by a chain a great animal, with dripping jaws and flapping ears. The skip hung

in 100se folds on the hound's neck, and his eyes were deep set and dashed with

"Here, Nebo!" called Hendricks, making a chirping sound with his lips The dog saw his master and bounded toward him so quickly that the chain was jerked from his keeper's hand. The next instant the dog had his fore paws on the window sill, was barking joy-

ously and trying to climb into the room.
Uttering little screams of fear, the ladies retreated from the window.
"Catch his chain, Johnson," ordered the detective. "If he gets into this room, he'll smash every piece of bric-abrae in it. He's great on a breakdown."

Johnson

Johnson caught the chain and drew the animal down from the window sill.

"No cause for fear, ladies," Hendricks assured them. "He is as gentle as a lamb except when he smells blood on the trail. Come, Mr.—er—Allen, don't you want to see an exhibition of his skill!"

"I Lope you will excuse me," said Allen. "I am really not well, and the news of my old friend's death has frightfully upset me. I wish you all possible success, but I would not care to witness your investigations unless unless I were feeling better or could be of assistance. I think I shall go to my old room and lie down. I was with my physician last night, or, rather, he me to see me."

Hendricks was surveying the man studiously as he spoke, and when he had finished he asked suddenly:

Allen sat down on a lounge and clasped his hands between his knees. "Why, Dr.-er-Burton," was his

slow reply.
"Think I have heard of him," said
the detective. "Madison avenue, eh?"
Allen hesitated, and as he did so his

eyes roved uneasily about the room. "No; he is not on Madison avenue," said he presently, and his gaze met that of the detective steadily, almost doggedly. It seemed to Lampkin that Hendricks had not heard Allen's last words. He had turned smilingly to Miss Ben-

"You'd not be the least bit afraid of Nebo if you knew what a friendly fellow he is," he said and bowed as he left the room.

Outside the dog sprang joyfully to his master, climbed upon him with his fore paws and tried to lick his face.

"Do you think he will be of use?" asked the doctor when Johnson and the animal had fallen behind as they went

toward the north walk.
"I don't know yet," answered Hendricks, "but I am afraid not. However, he may bring some little light to me when I see him at work."

When they reached the spot in the north walk where the murdered man had lain, Hendricks unclasped the chain from the dog's neck and with his hand touched one of the footprints. Instantly the animal lowered his nose and smelled the ground. Then with his nose to the sand he ran quickly to the spot where the tracks had ended. Here he stopped. He could go no farther. Back he came to the spot where the corpse had lain, made a little circle and then with a glad bark darted over the grass toward the gate at the side of the grounds. "No good," muttered Hendricks in a

tone of disappointment. "He will lose the scent out there where so many people have passed to and fro."

The dog ran on to the gate. They saw him spring over the wall and dart here and there as if bewildered in the street. Then he set up a dismal howl of

Hendricks whistled to him, and Nebo trotted back, looking quite dejected and ashamed.

"Poor fellow!" said the detective as he clasped the end of the chain on to the dog's collar. "Even you are puzzled. Take him home, Johnson."

Just then Ralph Benton emerged from the back veranda and started toward them, but seeing them he turned and disappeared in the house.

Hendricks winked and grinned at

Lampkin. "One reason I sent for the dog," he said-"I wanted to see who'd be afraid of him. Allen is either afraid or is sick,

and Ralph found he had forgotten some thing the moment he laid eyes on the "Do you think Mr. Allen was really

ill?" asked Lampkin. "I don't know. I'm going to get Kola to look up all the Dr. Burtons in New York and see if he can find one who went to see Allen in the city last night. I'd like to catch him in a misstatement.

"Kola?" said Lampkin. "Who's he?" "Ah, that's a fact! You have never met him. I have known him only about two weeks. He is an East Indian, s very sagacious young man. He came all the way from his native land to take lessons under me and has thrown his whole soul into detective work. I shall write a message for you to send to him after you get over in New York."

"You are going to dispense with my services?" asked the doctor.

"Until this afternoon at 4 o'clock," was the reply. Hendricks took from his pocket a piece of paper and a pencil and hurriedly wrote a few lines. Then he put the paper into an envelope and addressed it. "Send it by a messenger from the first office," he said. "I am from the first office, he said. I am going to take a room at a hotel over here, so as to be on the spot till I catch this thing by the tail. Go over and see how your office is getting on and then meet me at the hotel nearest the station. You know where it is. We passed

it coming out." "That will suit me exactly," replied Lampkin. "Look for me."

"Take good care of Nebo, Johnson," Hendricks called out to the man, who had gone on ahead of them. "So long, doctor. I'll see you later. I am going to get something to eat the first thing I

CHAPTER X.

That afternoon Miss Hastings had a caller. It was Mr. Richard Hastings, a New York banker.

"I am so glad to see you!" she ex-claimed impulsively as she came into the library and kissed him affectionate-

"I thought you would be," said the banker, taking a seat, "I read the news at lunch, and my wife and I both thought it was my duty to hasten out at once. I presume you would like to come over to us. Your room is always

ready, you know."
Miss Hastings moved uneasily in her

"Uncle, I don't see how I could leave just now under the circumstances," she said. "You know Alice and I are great friends, and it would be cruel to desert her at such a time when even ber aunt is away."

My Hastings gave her a cold glance

of disagreement.
"But," he said, "suspicion has fallen on the family. The papers are full of speculation and dark hints. I am sure your father would insist on my taking you home if he knew the situa-tion. I want to do, you see, as I should like him to act for me under similar circumstances."

'Suspicion has fallen on some one here?" gasped Miss Hastings. "Surely | gagement is as sacred to me as mar-

you are mistaken. Why, who"—
"It is very vague at present," answered the banker, "but it looks very squally for the son—what's his name?— Ralph. You see, his father was heavily insured-more than \$150,000, it is said —and the young man is his heir and badly in need of ready money. They say he is pretty wild and a sort of come easy, go easy chap, with a good many debts hanging over him."

"I don't believe a word of it." The young lady clinched her hand and to give emphasis to her words almost stood up. "He may be-Mr. Benton may be in debt-most young men arebut he is the very soul of honor. You don't know him. The public does not know him, else it would never dream of accusing him. The idea! It's ab-

"That may all be as you say," replied the banker, somewhat nettled, "but suspicion has fallen on him, and until he has got from under it I do not intend to have a Hastings mixed up in it. Why, I have already been asked three times today if you are a relative of mine, and it has been emharmseing, to admit that, my own niece

is visiting a family about which there is so much appleasant gossip. It is said that old Benton and his children never could agree and that they lived like

ents and dogs " "So they have even got that into the papers," said Miss Hastings. "Nothing is sacred nowadays. I know this, uncle— Ralph-Mr. Bentof-has had a world of trouble with his father, who was really losing his mind, and the trouble

really losing his mind, and the trouble Alice has had with her aunt and her father has almost killed her."

"It is certainly no place for you," said Mr. Hastings sternly, "and I have come to take you to your aunt's. The morning papers shall at least say that you have gone. I will not have it any other way."

"You are not my guardian, if you are my uncle," replied Miss Hastings with spirit. "I shall not desert my best friends at such a time just to gratify a

friends at such a time just to gratify a whim of yours."

The banker grew red with anger. "You are in love with the young scamp!" he cried furiously. "You need not deny it."

"I am engaged to Mr. Ralph Benton," was the cold reply, "and the enriage. You will not now expect me to

urove false at such a time."

Mr. Hastings took a deep breath. "Does your father know of this?" he

asked. "No. Ralph wanted to write to him a week ago, but as he intended to go to Boston on business in a few days I persuaded him to wait and see papa per-

"Well, you have got yourself into a pretty pickle is all I have to say," re-turned the banker, rising to his feet. "You have too much of your father's stubbornness to be moved by any argu-ment, so I shall not make myself ridiculous by persisting in trying to bring you to your senses. No young man of any true feeling would allow a young lady to remain here under such circum-

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Saved by His Friend.

Saved by His Friend.

From the New Era, Greenebury, Ind.
There is probably not a brighter young country school teacher to be found than Mr. Ira Wonn, who lives on a farm about five miles south of Greensburg, Ind., and teaches school at New Pennington, in Saltcreek township. Mr. Wonn boards with Mr. J. S. Wise, a prominent farmer, who is well-to-do.
Mr. Wonn was in this city a few weeks ago, looking stout and healthy, with an encouraging color in his cheeks. All who know him would formerly describe him as a pale and languid, with a very sallow or yellowish complexion, and his eyes duil; his auburn hair having the appearance of being dead. All of these indications of poor health have vanished, and all within the last few weeks, as the result, so we have learned form Mr. Wonn himself, of the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People.

Mr. Wonn for several years has been farming the whole year round, and taught school in the winter time, often riding many miles each day to his school. This great amount of exposure soon told on the outestout youth, and he rapidly asank by the suffering of rheumatism in his lower limbs. He wished to get along with as small expense as possible, so confined himself to the family physiciau, who, it proved in time, did not benefit him any.

"In early September." said Mr. Wonn, "I began my school duties, taking up my abode with Mr. Wies, for I thought the distance too far to drive each way every day, feeling as hadly as I did. I still treated my trouble, which I learned to look upon as a permanent and indeed, very disagreeable companion. I had been at the home of Mr. Wise but a few days, when he told me that he had just been cured of a trouble of four standing very similer to mine by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. He had a few doses on hand, which h I took, and hegan feeling better at once. I sent for too boxes, which I have used, and now I feel at the had just been cured of a trouble of the continuation of the propose of the propose of the continuation of the propose of